

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1803

By Pody

A RESOLUTION to honor the congregation of Fall Creek Baptist Church on the celebration of the church's 200th anniversary.

WHEREAS, we are pleased to recognize those historic churches and their congregations who have dedicated themselves and their resources to spreading the good news of the Gospel in their communities, thereby lifting up society with God's word; and

WHEREAS, Fall Creek Baptist Church has worked to improve the quality of both spiritual and temporal life in Tennessee for the past 200 years; and

WHEREAS, on the first Saturday in May 1822, twenty-one men and women met at the Copelands Meeting House on Sherrilltown Road in southeastern Wilson County to constitute Fall Creek, which was originally named Falling Creek by the charter members; and

WHEREAS, when organized in 1822, Fall Creek membership came from the Salem Association, and it remained a faithful and active member until 1921 when the Wilson County Baptist Association (WCBA) was formed; Fall Creek Baptist Church remains a member of WCBA and continues to serve as an active participant and financial supporter of the association; and

WHEREAS, in 1881, the church body moved from its location on Sherrilltown Road to its present location at 11535 Cainsville Road in Norene; the current building has undergone five construction projects resulting in several expansions of the educational space and installation of electric lights, restrooms, a kitchen and fellowship hall, a baptistry, a pastor's study, new pews, a steeple, an organ and sound system, carpets and drapes, a library, a paved parking lot with covered carports and accessible parking, and stained glass windows; and

WHEREAS, from 1822 to the present, the members of Fall Creek have given of their time, talents, and financial means to provide a modern and comfortable meeting house; when the decision was made to replace the 1881 building, the men of the church reverently disassembled it and sold salvageable materials, placing the money in the building fund, and after a fire in the attic of the sanctuary in October 1980, men of the community came and extracted the pews; and

WHEREAS, throughout its illustrious 200-year history, Fall Creek Baptist Church has been blessed with forty-three exceptional pastors and interim pastors; the first and longest serving pastor was Elder James Bond, who was elected in 1822 and served thirty years. Other pastors who held long tenures of ministry with Fall Creek include Brother Billy Trice, who served for twenty-eight years, and Brother John T. Oakley, who served for nineteen years; and

WHEREAS, pastoral leadership for Fall Creek Baptist Church also included Brother Fred Morgan, who was elected in March 1948 and was the first pastor to conduct services weekly rather than once per month on Saturday and Sunday as they were held prior to 1948. The current pastor, Brother Jim Yates, has served since September 2018; and

WHEREAS, Fall Creek Baptist Church's ministry programs include Sunday School, Baptist Young Peoples Union (BYPU), and the Women's Missionary Union (WMU), as well as various missionary organizations, discipleship training, and youth council; youth-dedicated ministries are led by a youth pastor, and there are activities available for members of all ages; and

WHEREAS, the members of Fall Creek Baptist Church enjoy several annual activities, including revival, the Christmas program, an Easter sunrise service, and a Thanksgiving dinner; and

WHEREAS, during its 200-year history, Fall Creek Baptist Church has been mission-minded, supporting mission activity at home and abroad through Tennessee Baptist Convention

and Southern Baptist Convention; the church has supported Shoebox ministry and the Appalachian backpack ministry and has been a strong supporter of the Baptist Children Home; and

WHEREAS, Fall Creek Baptist will celebrate its bicentennial on May 1, 2022; the observance will include an anniversary sermon delivered by Dave Shelley, Director of Missions for the Wilson County Baptist Association, a fellowship meal, and a time of remembrance featuring former pastors and leaders of the church. The public is also invited to join the festivities; and

WHEREAS, it is only fitting that we extend our best wishes to Fall Creek Baptist Church for many future blessings as the church's exemplary ministry continues to inspire individuals in the Norene community and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate Pastor Jim Yates and the congregation of Fall Creek Baptist Church on the celebration of the church's 200th anniversary and wish them much continued success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.